

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant responds herein to the Office Action dated April 25, 2006.

Applicant's attorneys appreciate the Examiner's thorough search and examination of the present patent application.

Claims 1-11 are pending in this application. Claims 6-11 were withdrawn from consideration and claims 1-5 were rejected.

Claims 1-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,063,023 to Sakiyama et al. ("Sakiyama").

Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

In accordance with amended independent claim1, the claimed endoscope system includes "a plurality of types of optical adapters each of which is freely detachably attached to the distal section of the electronic endoscope, and each having a predetermined observational optical system that includes an identification section with which the type of optical adapter can be identified" as well as "an optical adapter identifying/verifying facility that detects the identification section so as to verify the type of optical adapter". Contrary to the Examiner's assertions Sakiyama does not teach these limitations. Claim 1 has several types of adapters, see for example Fig. 1. Sakiyama has only one!

Thus, Sakiyama at col.1, lines 5-10 describes a measuring endoscope for forming two images of an object to be measured. The images are taken by two objective lenses at different positions on an imaging device incorporated in a main endoscope unit. The data of the endoscopic images is processed and measurement is carried out.

In a nutshell, Sakiyama fails to disclose (1) a plurality of types of optical adapters having a predetermined observational optical system including an identification section, and (2) a facility to verify the type of optical adapter.

Sakiyama teaches only one type of an optical adapter 4, hence there is no motivation to identify that adapter's type. The examiner refers to col. 7, lines 30-41 as teaching the claimed optical adapter identifying/verifying facility. This is not so. In col. 7, lines 38-41 Sakiyama states:

The computer 18 performs measurement on the object to be measured on the basis of the retrieved optical data specific to the optical adaptor 4.

This statement does not accord with the description on page 11, lines 7-11 of the present application that reads:

The CPU 18 executes various features according to a main program so as to control actions. Moreover, the CPU 18 includes an adapter identification block 18a that serves as an optical adapter identifying/verifying means for identifying the types of optical adapters 7a, 7b, 7c, etc.

The above specification text supports the claim language "an optical adapter identifying/verifying facility that detects the identification section so as to verify the type of optical adapter" in amended claim 1. That claim language is not anticipated by the referenced, prior art text. Sakiyama does not teach, disclose, or suggest a plurality of different type optical adapters and identifying the types of optical adapters as recited in claim 1.

Thus, Applicants' independent claim 1 is patentably distinct from Sakiyama. Claims 2-5, depend directly or indirectly from the above discussed independent claim and are, therefore, patentable for the same reasons, as well as because of the combination of features in those claims with the features set forth in the independent claim.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application, allow the claims as amended and pass this case to issue.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, on July 7, 2006

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Respectfully submitted,

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